

NEW PROJECT FOR REFORMING THE ENGLISH ALPHABET AND ORTHOGRAPHY.

THE MEMORIAL

OF THE

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SETTING FORTH

*The plan of a reformed Alphabet and Orthography, and praying the assistance of Congress to extend a knowledge of it over the nation.*

FEBRUARY 19, 1844.

Read, and laid upon the table.

As a facility in a new self-supporting system of general and liberal education, (which has been proved feasible in a school of six years,) as a facility also in literary business, I have, during some eight years, been considering the importance and practicability of a thorough reformation of our written language, and a strict conformation thereof to the spoken. I have at length come to some results, which I wish extensively to communicate, especially among the people of this country.

Spoken language has usually originated among the unenlightened, and, by its own ductility, in its progress towards perfection, it keeps pace with general national improvement. *But with the writing of this language it is far otherwise.* By the exactness and stability of its forms, it must remain unchanged, unless by general consent. On these accounts, chiefly, the speaking and the writing of the same language do invariably, without special preventions, tend towards a separation, though very slowly, and therefore without notice or alarm. Hence, by convention, they should be brought together, when all that is wrong in writing should be corrected, and when means should, if possible, be instituted to keep them together. At the commencement of the last century, the writing of our language was far indeed from perfection. From that time its capacity for a full and simple representation of our increasing number of primary sounds has been gradually diminishing, till it has finally become intolerable, raising from many, especially foreigners, the cry for reformation—radical and speedy, if possible; *but at any rate, a reformation.*

In obedience to this loud and pressing call, many in this age of improvement have projected, and some even have attempted, such a reformation; though as yet without much success. But should my vast labor upon this work also prove unavailing; *yet these facts do actually encourage me in it; for they do all show that such a reformation is greatly needed; that it is now crowding hard upon us; that it is struggling vigorously for*

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*existence; that it must soon burst into being, and, with might, majesty, and glory, bless our thrifty nation, and all who use our rapidly spreading literature. Though this may appear to some strange and paradoxical, yet it is in fact true.*

Well aware that this is a great work, requiring both talent and enterprise, and the favor of Heaven likewise; well aware, also, that this grand concern of patriotism, philanthropy, and religion, is depending solely on the pleasure of the *English Republic of Letters*—the authors and publishers; yet it seemed that I could do something towards forwarding so desirable an object, by showing plainly to my countrymen, and as far as possible to the English race, *the vast necessity and the immense utility of a simple and complete alphabet, containing one distinct, visible, invariable sign for each of our forty important primary sounds, and an orthography relieved of all redundancies and complexity*, and at agreement, in the main, at least, with the most generally approved standards of English orthoëpy. This is indeed my humble aim and design, while I seek for Heaven's blessing, and the smiles of the nation, and of the English race, upon the favored ones who shall accomplish the task I have begun, but may not live, or be able, to accomplish. Be assured, then, that I have not entered on this business without first counting the cost.

I will now endeavor to give the chief reasons for this reformation :

1. Our spoken language, on account of its combined excellencies, its variety, copiousness, strength, melody, and majesty, is, to say the least, *one of the best now living in the world*; while somehow its written form, by its astonishing deficiencies and redundancies, is, as far as I know, *quite the worst in the world*; not to except, on some accounts, even the French. This is a fact I conclude none will deny; and of course it needs no proof. Now who would not strongly desire that this valuable and refined language should be furnished with a dress in natural and decent harmony with its beauty and worth, dignity and glory? Let our senses of consistency, of propriety, of congruity, and of honor also, be here exercised, and produce their natural and legitimate fruits.

2. Our alphabet is both redundant and deficient. Four of our twenty-six letters are useless, of course greatly injurious—c, j, q, and x, their place being supplied by other letters already and necessarily in the alphabet. We have therefore, at most, but twenty-two available letters to represent our primary sounds, which are at least forty. There have been many doubts and decisions against *w* also, as redundant; but I have finally concluded to retain it, believing it to represent different degrees of a very light consonant sound peculiar to itself, in unison with the vowel sound of *u* in full, and *o* in wolf. We have, then, *but two more letters than half as many as we do absolutely need!* Who can realize this, and not advocate an immediate supply of eighteen new ones, *that every important primary sound may have one and its own peculiar mark to represent it to the eye.*

Our said twenty-two letters were once enough doubtless to represent all the elementary sounds then in use. But this number for ages remaining the same, and the oral language, the whole time, improving and becoming more and more copious, it has now become extremely deficient. What, then, should be done? Surely as goods increase, so should store-room. As children in a family multiply, so should appropriate names to represent and distinguish them. Hence, truly, as the primary sounds of

any language are added, they should be marked with additional appropriate letters. What strange and ridiculous shifts and expedients have we been driven to, that we might, *somehow, possibly* get along with the old alphabet! What would you think of a tiller of the ground who had, for years, at vast expense, grewed twice as much corn as he could either dispose of or accommodate with room? Or, of the condition of a family, or a school, containing forty children with only twenty-two names for the whole? Worse than this, indeed, is it for us to have but twenty-two letters to represent and distinguish our forty different primary sounds. Of course we must necessarily put a number of very different sounds on the same letter, as some four or five on *a*, about as many on *o*, &c. ; all unavoidably bringing on the learner much useless labor and vexatious embarrassment, causing even years of the precious time, liberty, comfort and joy of our dear children to be *worse than thrown away*. Expunge the four useless letters, and add eighteen new ones, and you will do much towards perfecting the alphabet, and bringing up the written to the spoken language, and cause an immense saving in literary education and business. Is not here, then, a good reason for a radical and thorough reformation?

3. Another reason for this reformation, and a principal one, is *the many different methods in the old orthography of expressing the same sounds, and that by sounded letters*. I have already discovered one hundred and eighty-one. Forty such methods are all that we need. Of course one hundred and forty-one of them are redundant and useless. More may remain to be discovered; but, probably, not many. This is an astonishing and doleful fact, causing by itself alone about four and a half times the otherwise necessary labor of learning to read, as is demonstrated by dividing the said one hundred and eighty-one, the whole number, by forty, the whole necessary number. Indeed, this would be true were all these different methods of expression simple, distinct, and uniform. But they are interwoven, implicated, and enveloped in a thousand tangles and witchknots. To extricate and unfold these would puzzle and perplex even a philosopher, if he were now for the first time put to the task. Although you who early become what are usually called good spellers and readers, and have in better days, forgotten most of the many educational afflictions, hardships, and torments of your dependent, confiding, obedient, and buoyant childhood, may not at once, perhaps, be ready to acknowledge the truth of this story; yet the great expense of our hard-earned money in common primary schooling—the quantity of our children's time spent in irksome, stupifying, and demoralizing confinement—the privation of their many innocent and keenly relished juvenile pleasures and enjoyments—and the loss of their comfort, health, and often even of life, during years spent upon this almost inexplicable snarl—upon our very deficient, and our redundant alphabet—our clumsy, complicated, and barbarous orthography, *both the most shapeless, ugly, and inconvenient to be found among all the nations of the earth*, tells its sad reality, and tells it with an iron voice and a hundred tongues!

I beg you here to allow me to illustrate a little freely. Take, for example, *a*, the only pure vowel in our whole written language, all the others being sometimes used as consonants. It should mean *ā* as in hate, and nothing else, and no other letter or letters should mean *ā*. But what is the fact? Why, *a* not only means *ā*, but it also means *āu* as in hall, and *ä* as in fact, and *āh* as in sirrah, and *āh* as in hat, and *ōh* as in wash, and *ūh* as in ex-

hilarate, and *ēh* as in any, and *īh* as in courage—nine different meanings. But this is by no means the extent of the difficulty. For *e* sometimes means *ā*, as in the contracts *e'er*, *ne'er*; also *ei* as in eight, and *ey* as in they. There is, however, a worse trouble still; for *o* sometimes means *āu* and *ō* the same as *a*; and *aa* sometimes means *ā*, and *āh*, and *ūh* the same as *a*. Moreover, *e*, *ei*, and *ey*, like *a*, sometimes mean *āh*. I might go on and double the length of this strange account; but let this suffice. Now what a snarl, puzzle, maze, and labyrinth, for a child, or even a philosopher, to develope and disenthral! Well might the dear little boy, who had not become entirely benumbed at school, nor there lost quite all his native genius and inquisitiveness, in the simplicity of his heart exclaim, "Why, master, it seems *a* means most everything, and most everything means *a*, and how shall I know what to call them?" But, on some accounts, it is worse with *e*, *i*, *o*, and *u*, especially as each is sometimes used as a consonant. On quitting the vowels at present, let me state a few strange facts: I have already discovered not less than twenty-three different methods of expressing the short simple sound *ūh*, or *u* as in duck; fourteen of expressing *ēh*, or *e* as in met; eleven of expressing *ē*, or *e* as in mete; and eleven of expressing *īh*, or *i* as in pin. In searching among the consonants, I find things, in this respect, very bad, though not so bad as among the vowels. In one instance I have found eleven; in another eight; and in another six different methods of expressing the same sound. This is probably the most embarrassing and vexatious evil found within the precincts of our literature, or that of any other nation; and it should, if possible, be expelled.

4. *The grievous cumbrance of silent letters* is another and a strong argument for a reformation. With these our writing and printing have become loaded and clogged. Though some of them are sometimes used to mark some particular sound of some other letter, as *e* to mark the sound of *o* in note, and *a* in hate; yet generally they are entirely useless—*nothing but old rubbish in the way*. These were doubtless once all sounded; for who could be such a horrid misanthrope as to have put them in, or any one of them, without just occasion. But fact also proves this in some cases, which will settle the doctrine for the whole. Take, for example, the word *Wednesday*; this was originally written Woden's day, or the day of Woden, an ancient British idol. For ease of pronunciation and pleasantness of sound, it has, in course of time, become changed to *Wednesday*. This teaches us how we came by the silent *d* and *e* in that word. The case is similar, I conclude, with regard to such letters in all other words. Our written language has so far improved and changed from what it formerly was, that the sounds once marked by these letters are discontinued, while the letters themselves *are still retained a heavy useless burden*, because none had conventional authority to throw them out. They at length seem to have acquired a kind of sacredness, like the old wooden gods of the ancient Hawaiians displaced by new ones, and set outside of their temples, which the celebrated Capt. Cook molested at the forfeiture of his life! And perhaps *I* ought to look out, lest *I*, for molesting these old silent letters, should share the same fate!

Without a reformation, this evil is still slowly but constantly increasing. I well remember when some letters, now silent, were sounded. There are now some letters in a state of transition from sound to silence, as *ts* in priests, *th* in clothes. But there is another change going onward in



our language, though more slowly still. Another sound is becoming extant, requiring another letter and another syllable, all as yet without any additional marking, as in flou<sub>a</sub>r, ou<sub>a</sub>r, pris<sub>a</sub>m, spas<sub>a</sub>m. More than all this, there is a new primary sound, coming slowly into existence, and used in several interjections. It is a deep guttural mute, formed with open mouth, by closing the glottis. This has never been marked with an appropriate letter; nor has it, to my knowledge, before been noticed. It is possible that some primary sounds have also been going slowly out of existence. Thus time operates on language, as a river on the adjacent land, taking off in one place and building on in another. All these changes in oral language call for corresponding changes in the written.

5. *The mere preparations for the knowledge valuable in itself have cost quite too much.* The expense of money, time, and toil, laid out on the tools, scaffolding, and other preparations for raising the temple of knowledge, has prevented much pleasant and useful labor upon the glorious building itself. Therefore, our alphabet and orthography, also our grammar and chirography too, if you please, essential parts of such preparation, should be rendered much more simple and easy, *and, withall, a much more agreeable part of a primary education.* This would give our children much time, now worse than thrown away in sore and ruinous confinement, to be pleasantly employed in the noble, captivating, and delightful business of storing up treasures of useful knowledge, appropriate to their age, inclination, and genius—such as oral language, natural history, and the rudiments of numbers, of some mechanic arts, of music, of physiology, and of the physical sciences in general, &c. &c. This topic would furnish matter for a long discourse; but I cannot now stay about it. Though a short hint, may it prove a seasonable and efficient one to all parents and other teachers, to all officers, counsellors, and helpers in an early domestic and common school education. “I speak as unto wise men; judge ye what I say.”

6. By neglecting this reformation, *we give other nations the advantage over us.* Whether considered with regard to our own internal national concerns, or to our comparison with other nations, this furnishes a new and considerable article of political economy. This argument must touch our national pride and our patriotism in a tender spot. Knowledge is wealth and power; and, in connexion with judgment and virtue, *it is wisdom.* Do think, then, of the three years saved in a primary education, and of the four, when a classic and professional is also included, all to be devoted to the pleasant and rapid acquisition of the most valuable and available knowledge. Think, also, of the immense object of saving one-third in learning the art of writing, and in all literary business, public and private; but, above all, take into sober consideration the vastly superior literary facilities furnished by the simple and complete alphabets, and the pure and natural orthographies of some of the old nations, and more especially those of some small nations lately arisen from a state of totally illiterate barbarism, such as the Cherokees and the Sandwich Islanders. With regard to *this thing*, also, the Bible saying, “The first shall be last, and the last first,” may yet be verified. These superior facilities, when they shall have had time for maturity, and for producing their natural results, will probably, other things being equal, cause the children of the last mentioned nations to be better educated at twelve years of age than ours at sixteen, unless we do, in this respect, give ours equal privileges. I think

it a generally conceded fact, that our language has a worse external dress than that of any other nation. This nation, therefore, and all who use our language, are suffering extreme comparative disadvantage, and should be effectually aroused to our senses on the subject, and be forward *and the first*, at a thorough reformation. If Old England, from whom we derived our existence and our mother tongue, will not reform, or take the lead in this object, let this young nation, her vigorous and enterprising child, set her a good example, and avail ourselves of the natural advantages of her delinquency. Here truly is an exciting national argument, and will we be either English or Americans, and not feel its force, nor be early at reform?

7. Another argument is, *the great increase of the English and the Anglo-American enterprise and power*. The many improvements among this peculiar and distinguished race of men, especially since the commencement of the last century, furnish a good argument to sustain the case in hand. In accomplishing this grand affair, *so necessary and so vast in its consequences*, we should be acting worthy of our race and name—*worthy of ourselves*. Will you now just take a glance at the rapid advance of this noble section of human (of Enoch and Noah's) posterity during these one hundred and forty-four years, notwithstanding all our grievous embarrassments and hindrances,—their advance, I mean, in general learning, in the various solid and useful sciences, in the many mechanic and liberal arts, in agriculture and commerce, in civil and religious light and liberty, and in their many successful inventions and efforts for the benefit of our own sort of people, and for the general elevation, improvement, and amelioration of the condition and prospects of mankind. Consider, also, the hasty and gigantic growth, within this term, of the English and American wealth and influence in the earth, and the swift extension of our language in many and populous nations, and in all hemispheres and climes; thus, *so far*, fairly promising, according to the strong opinion of some learned men, to become universal; and then say, whether English consistency and English glory do not imperiously demand corresponding enterprise for the thorough reformation of the elements of *our wide-spreading literature*, and for bringing them forward from where the dark ages left them, up to the present English wants and demands, to the high and noble aims of this people, and to a congruous level with our other general standards in this eventful and improving age. Now, who of our blood and spirit and tongue can resist this argument?

8. *The great helps which this reformation would afford in the general concerns of education, is my last argument*. This is rather a compend of arguments, which, however, have a strong relationship among themselves. I will just notice these in proper order.

1. It would annihilate the vast and endless task of learning to spell the very numerous and strangely written words of our language, which have been, by mere dint of memory, necessarily learned, *each by itself*, without much assistance from general rules; *for, the sounds of the words would, in writing, invariably suggest the proper letters*. Think of the years that would be saved from this tiresome work.

2. It would prevent almost all the expense of learning to read *well*, the whole English language; *for, after the alphabet shall be well learned, the letters would always invariably suggest the proper sounds*. Speed would

be acquired of course by use and habit; and accent, emphasis, and inflections, would all be natural, as in common speaking, provided what is read be previously understood by the learner or practitioner; *and none other should ever be read vocally*, and cannot be, without damage in the important art of reading.

3. This proposed reformation would save about one-third of the usual expense of learning chirography, or the art of writing; for the capital and small letters, though of different size, are exactly of the same form. From these three sources, all combined, there will, I think, arise a saving of three years in a good primary education, and of four, when a classic and professional one is included. What an immense object this would be for the rising generations, especially of republican citizens! It would indeed nearly double the worth of time in childhood and early youth.

4. It would render common learning much more pleasant and captivating to children; for, what was before uninteresting and hard, is banished, and all things are now made simple and easy; consequently the progress would be rapid and delightful.

5. It would, with proper books, render parents, in general, after they shall have learned the reformed alphabet, at once, the competent teachers of their own children, at home, in almost the whole of what has been considered a good common literary education;—thus preventing most of the expense, the sufferings, the dangers, the viciousness, and the many enormous evils of the common schools. Had I time, I should like to dwell on this very important matter, and explain and illustrate at large all things therein. But I cannot now.

6. It would, by its sure consequences, add much to the health, promise, comfort, safety and happiness of children; a matter, indeed, which all parents and philanthropists should duly appreciate, and earnestly seek for. To show this in detail would take too much time for the present.

7. It would, in fine, contribute much towards a thing greatly to be desired, especially in all states or nations of republican government and free institutions—*an easily self-supporting system of general and liberal education for both sexes, adequate to the probable or chosen business of life, to be completed at an age between sixteen and twenty years.*

I have now presented plainly before you, eight of the chief reasons for the complete and speedy reformation of the writing of our excellent and worthy language; which writing, or mode of representing it to the mind by sight, has long been intolerable, is still growing worse and worse, is a disgrace to an enlightened people, and an unseemly stain upon the fair countenance of our national glory. And which of these reasons can you point out as futile or weak?

*The next thing I should do is, to show you the possibility and feasibility of this reformation.* Some whom I respect more for their erudition than for their enterprise, have spoken discouragingly on this subject. But it is by no means so with all. The vast importance of the thing, however, I believe is generally conceded. Although it would be a new thing in the world, and a great one also, and even the greatest that was ever accomplished by human agency, and although many have failed in their attempts to produce it, yet I by no means despair; for this is beyond dispute, a race, a day, and a nation of wonders. Men, especially men of our origin and kindred, have not yet done their best, nor their mightiest. We are now entering upon an age of light, peace, and improvement, such as the

world has never seen ; an age to be distinguished by boldness in conception, skill in planning, and success in achievement. Great and unheard of things are to be devised, expected, undertaken, and accomplished. Compared with what men *might* be, and what, in some *favoured*, some “*golden*,” some *millennial* age, they probably *will* be, there is now passing over the stage of life and action, a mere *dwarf*, or *wreck*, of the human race.

Men can, and will, yet do more than they ever have done, and leave behind them stupendous monuments of wisdom, rather than those of folly, such as the ancients did in Egypt and other parts of the world. The summit of human efficiency has never yet been reached. Look forward with raised expectation, and the eye of faith, and behold the wise and worthy wonders which shall be accomplished when war shall cease, and the blessings of light, and virtue, and Christianity shall pervade the earth. Why not, then, in the early stage, and incipient progress of this age of philosophic, philanthropic, and Christian efficiency, and as a chief means of hastening it forward—why not apprehend, attempt, and bring to pass so great and so good a thing, as the conformation of our written to our spoken language ? This is indeed a matter of interest and of great necessity, and would be of unspeakable benefit to all the English world ; but more particularly to this country of republican government, and of free popular institutions. It would truly produce an Augustan age in English literature, science, liberal learning, and general improvement, and mark the present as an era of distinguished lustre.

But, after all, this is, in itself, not only a *possible*, but an *easy* work. We are kept from its accomplishment, more by *cobweb*, than by *adamantine* chains. The obstructions exist more in fancy than in fact. On subjects of this nature, we are too apt to startle at real or supposed difficulties, and to imagine them insurmountable. We take fright at monsters of our own creating, and run from apprehended to real evils. And how long must it be so ?

Now to the case in hand. Let the authors, editors, and publishers of books and papers so agree, or consent, and the work is done at once, and done with the utmost ease ! And who can say, in this age of light, skill, and enterprise, that such agreement, or consent, cannot be obtained ?

Notwithstanding all the hindrances from various quarters, what immense improvements and useful inventions have occurred to bless the world since the great astronomer, Galileo, of Florence, was so cruelly persecuted for his discoveries in astronomy ; since the severe punishment, even in England, of the honest inventor of the first water saw-mill ; and especially within seventy or eighty years past. Now, shall we of this age, and this country, be afraid of light and truth—of investigation and project—of invention and experiment, for the good of the nation and of mankind ? Will you, indeed, be ready to persecute and punish the patient, assiduous, and self-sacrificing modern inventor and reformer with ridicule, reproach and scorn, and call him “one-ideal enthusiast,” “narrow-minded schemer,” or “Utopian projector.” Let not this be the bitter reward of these devoted patriots and philanthropists, especially in this day and land of free and independent inquiry, and of large and liberal views. In all things of this nature, let us act according to the dictates of true honor and impartial justice.

But I will argue the possibility and feasibility of this project, from what has already taken place in our literature since the commencement



of the last century. We have seen, in *our* day, considerable improvements, *alterations* at least, in our written language, our style of composition, and some in our alphabet. Once we had but twenty-four letters, and called *z* ezzard, and used much the long *ess*. I have before suggested, that I well remember when some letters now silent were then sounded. We once had *s-h-e-w* for *show*, *mu-s-i-c-k* for *music*, *fa-v-o-u-r* for *favor*. In the two last examples, though the wrong letter is retained; yet one is thrown off as useless, and that too without unbalancing the earth, or throwing it from its orbit! We have begun to throw off some of our verbal terminations, as *al* from classical, and *ment* from advancement, and, lo! even this has not clothed the nation with sackcloth, nor filled the English world with lamentation, mourning and wo! Now, why should not the desirable change, hitherto so partial, superficial, and sluggish, by use of proper means, like other things, *become radical and rapid*, and in some few years be accomplished? Let us take strong interest in this thing ourselves, and by all means endeavor to create one in others, and then be looking out for desirable and glorious results. But, I beg, let no people of influence or authority, no parents or teachers, no friends of their country or of mankind, discourage or hinder this so great, so necessary and so benevolent a work.

However, after all, the grand preliminary to a general reception of a plan for this reformation is, *that by its general merits, it be found worthy of adoption, and that this worthiness be extensively promulgated and known*. Let this suggestion call to my aid, from any ladies or gentlemen of literature and beneficence, such helps in this arduous work as they may be able freely to contribute, that a plan for reformation be soon brought as near as possible to perfection, and circulated over the nation, and among all people who use our language.

*I will now give you some remarks preliminary to a reformed alphabet and orthography.*

After long and close attention to this whole matter, I am now disposed to give my *present*, though imperfect views of the subject, concluding that I shall not, very soon, be able to bring it much nearer to perfection without help from others.

I have placed in succession, and according to my ideas of the best order, *forty letters*, twenty-two old, and eighteen new ones, each appropriated to its own peculiar primary sound, and to that alone. The first division of these is into sixteen vowels, (*each subject to different degrees, and some slight variation of its own peculiar sound*), and twenty-four consonants of different kinds. These letters are *subdivided* into seven different sorts, to be noticed in the recital, and all represent simple sounds, except five, *i, j, r, w, and y*, which represent their own peculiar sounds, inseparably combined with another sound, which is marked by another letter.

Whenever the sound of *y* comes before *u*, long or short, *y* should be invariably placed before it, as in *yule, young*, and then these sounds of *u* would be always both simple and uniform.

I exemplify no sounds but purely English, or such as have become fully Anglicized, although some are still, in the old orthography, found in their ancient or foreign costumes.

The forms of the letters, in both writing and printing, should be kept as near alike as the nature of the case will allow. This would give great



facility in learning the art of writing, and in reading that which is written by others.

The vowels are exactly the same in name and signification. The consonants are brought as near this rule as their vocal names allow.

It is very convenient and philosophical to appropriate two names, one *initial*, and the other *final*, to each of those twenty consonants, which are used sometimes before, and sometimes after, the syllabic vowel sound. This would give ease to the apprehension of the sound by the mind, and the utterance of it by the organs of speech, as *lê-êl* in the word *lê-u-êl*; *nê-ên*, as *nê-u-ên*, &c. *Note*. When *r* begins a syllable, it should be called *re*; in every other situation, it should be called *ur*.

In writing, the unpleasant and embarrassing business of *dotting the ies and jays*, *crossing the tees* and *placing the apostrophes*, is here all prevented.

In giving the significations of the vowels by the use of the old alphabet and orthography, I do not introduce any improper diphthongs or triphthongs, except in cases where it is doubtful which vowel in a syllable bears the sound intended, or whether the whole together bears it, as *eau* in *beau*, *ew* in *sew*, *oo* in *boot*, *ou* in *tour*.

The real sound of *a* is not affected by being followed by *r*. Its sound till it overtakes that of *r*, is exactly the same in *hare* as in *hat*, and the same in *palm* as in *part*. All the seeming difference between the sound of *a* in *barely*, and *a* in *barrel*, arises from the difference in the sound of *r* in the two words.

There are in oral communication many small variations of vowel sounds, caused either by careless use, or by different degrees of voice, or by connexion with other letters, which are not of sufficient importance or stability to pay for marking. I therefore allow them to take their natural course and destiny in pronunciation, rather than multiply letters.

Our immense number of diphthongs and triphthongs, which appear in writing, are now all reduced to single sounds, except three, *oi* and *oy*, as in *boil*, *boy*; *ou* and *ow*, as in *thou*, *now*; and *ay*, pronounced *âë*, meaning *yes*. We have now no triphthongal sounds of real sounded vowels; *uoi* in *quoit*, seems like one; but the *u* in this case is a consonant, having exactly the power of *w* as in *wait*.

There are so many words embracing *o* as in *note*, *a* as in *part*, and *o* as in *prove*, each lightened and cut short with an implied aspirate, or with a consonant, as in *ôh! âh! wôlf*, that I am obliged to appropriate to each of these three sounds a distinct letter.

For the present the old *tee* may be used in printing; but, in writing, I would, for convenience, use the same body with a turn and cross at the bottom, and no cross at the top.

To avoid extra expense in the first printing of *my forty letters and five characters*, I have been driven to various expedients, such as inverting some of the old letters, using some of the former capitals, and borrowing some of the Arabic numerals. But let it be particularly noticed, that in case this project succeed, or give fair promise of it, these twenty-one borrowed forms, or such of them as are not pleasant or convenient, should be displaced by new letters, the most pleasant and convenient that can be devised, and then formed from new type-moulds.

To make every important matter very plain, I have put down the names

of the letters and the significations, or the different modes of expression in the old orthography, for which each letter is now made to stand, all in the use of the former writing of our language. The old *ies* and *jays* have no dots.

*The first subdivision of the forty letters embraces eight vowels the most vocal, or sounding.*

Forms and Names.	Significations, or different methods of expressing each sound.	Number of methods of expressing each primary sound.
<b>A</b> a. âve. This letter stands for a in hall; and o in storm,		2
<b>B</b> v. â—a in part, palm; aa in baa, - - - - -		2
<b>a</b> a. â—	{ a in hate; ay in say; first e in the contracts e'er, ne'er; ei in eight; ey in they; first i in possibility; y in analysis, - - - - -	7
<b>O</b> o. ô—	{ o in note; oo in floor; au in hautboy; eau in beau; ew in sew, - - - - -	5
<b>U</b> u. û, (not <i>yu</i> )—u in duke; w in new; eo in feudal, - - -		3
<b>I</b> i. ie—	{ i in pine; y in try. It has a peculiar primary sound of its own, terminating on a light sound of e as in mete, - - - - -	2
<b>E</b> e. êê—	{ e in mere; ee in cheer; i in shire; y in duty; ey in key; ei in seize; ie in siege; ay in quay, (a wharf); æ in ægis; œ in œsophagus; ia in parliament, -	11
<b>f</b> f. ôô—	{ o in prove; oo in soon; ou in soup; oeu in manoeu- vre; u in rule; w in screw, - - - - -	6
		<hr/> 38

*The second subdivision includes eight vowels, the least vocal.*

<b>A</b> a. ôh. This letter stands for o in stone, throat, oh! spoken,	1
<b>q</b> q. ôh—o in not; a in watch; first e in envelope, (a cover),	3
<b>7</b> 7. ôh—o in wolf; u in pull; oo in book; ou in should, -	4
<b>Y</b> y. âh—â in aha, sirrah, ah! first a in Adam, - - -	1
<b>n</b> v. âh. { a in hare, hat; e in there; ey in eery; aa in Aaron; ei in heir, (an inheritor), - - - - -	5

Forms and Names.	Significations, or different methods of expressing each sound.	Number of methods of expressing each primary sound.
<b>ə</b> ə. ŭh— <div> <div>This letter stands for e in her ; i in sir ; u in duck ; o in done ; first a in exhilarate ; ah in Jonah ; ai in Britain ; ia in elysian ; aa in Isaac ; ei in foreign ; eo in sturgeon ; io in region ; oo in flood ; oa in cup- board ; oe in does ; ou in young ; y in satyr ; the first sound of r in our ; of m in spasm ; ie in grazier ; ea in pearl ; eu in messieurs ; ue in guerdon,</div> <div>-</div> </div>		23
<b>ɛ</b> ɛ. ěh— <div> <div>e in met ; ea in dread ; ei in heifer ; a in any ; æ in diæresis ; ai in said ; i in equity ; ie in friend ; ay in says ; œ in asafœtida ; oi in connoisseur ; u in bury ; y in many ; ey in valley,</div> <div>-</div> </div>		14
<b>4</b> 4. ĩh— <div> <div>i in pin ; ie in sieve ; a in courage ; ai in certain ; e in pretty ; ee in been ; o in women ; ia in mar- riage ; y in lynx ; u in busy ; eo in pigeon,</div> <div>-</div> </div>		11
		<hr/> 62

The whole discovered number of methods of expressing our sixteen vowel sounds, is 100.

*The third subdivision of the letters contains four consonants, called semi-vowels, because each sometimes forms a syllable. Note.—Both initial and final names, for reasons before stated, are used for the twenty following letters :*

<b>l</b> l. lē—ěl.	This letter stands for l in lull, little,	-	-	1
<b>m</b> m. mē—, ěm,—m	in mimic, spasm,	-	-	1
<b>n</b> n. nē—ěn,—n	in nun ; mp in comptroller,	-	-	2
<b>r</b> r. rē—ŭr—	<div> <div>r in roar, centre ; ur bur ; er in terse ; ir in mirth ; ar in polar ; or in manor ; lo in colo- nel ; misplaced in iron, apron. Its own pecu- liar long vocal consonant sound is always united with u as in duck, more or less, from the least possible degree, as in rinse, up to a full syllable, as in flour,</div> <div>-</div> </div>	-	-	8
				<hr/> 12

*The fourth subdivision consists of thirteen common consonants.*

<b>b</b> b. bē—ěb.	This letter stands for b in babe ; p in cupboard,	2
<b>d</b> d. dē—ěd,—d	in dread, did, duty, - - - -	1

Forms and Names.	Significations, or different methods of expressing each sound.	Number of methods of expressing each primary sound.
<b>f</b> f. fē—ēf.	{ 'This letter stands for f in fife; ph in phlegm; gh in cough, - - - - -	3
<b>g</b> g. gē—ēge—	{ g in gem; j in just; dg in edge; di in soldier; d in gradual. This sound is primary, but not simple, always beginning with the sound of d, - - - - -	5
<b>s</b> s. sē—ēs,—s	in sense; c in peace, - - - - -	2
<b>v</b> v. vē—ēv,—v	in valve; f in of; ph in Stephen, - - -	3
<b>z</b> z. zē—ēz,—z	in zone; s in praise; c in suffice; x in xebec, - - -	4
<b>c</b> c. chē—ēch—	{ ch in church; tch in thatch; ti in question; t or te in righteous; z in zechine; t at the end of an accented syllable before short u, as in nature, creature, picture, feature, -	6
<b>t</b> t. thē—ēth,—th	in thou, there, breathe, - - - - -	1
<b>q</b> q. shē—ēsh—	{ sh in shine; s in sure; ssi in passion; ci in gracious; sci in conscious; c in enunciate; ti in motion; second t in substantiate; ce in ocean; ch in chaise; si in tension, - - - - -	11
<b>R</b> R. thē—ēth,—th	in thick, strength, breath, - - - - -	1
<b>z</b> z. zhē—ēzh—	{ z in azure; s in pleasure; si in hosier; ti in transition, - - - - -	4
<b>J</b> J. gē—ēg,—g	in gig, get, frog, - - - - -	1
		<hr/> 44

*The fifth subdivision comprehends three mutes, which suddenly open or stop the voice.*

<b>k</b> k. kē—ēk—	{ This letter stands for k in kick; c in cat; q in quit; gh in hough; ch in chord, -	5
<b>p</b> p. pē—ēp—	{ p in prop; gh in hiccough; lf in half-penny, - - - - -	3
<b>t</b> t. tē—ēt,—t	in trot; d in chopped, - - - - -	2
		<hr/> 10

*In the sixth subdivision of letters there are three initials, used only before the syllabic vowel sound, and, of course, have but one name each.*

Forms and Names.	Significations, or different methods of expressing each sound.	Number of methods of expressing each primary sound.
<b>W</b> w. wē	This letter stands for w in what, swamp, water; u in quote; o in choir; the first sound of o in one. It has its own peculiar light consonant sound, in different degrees, according to its different connexions, united with different degrees of the vowel sound of o in wolf, or u in pull, -	4
<b>y</b> y. yē	y in yarn; i in union; e in ewe; j in hallelujah; the first sound of u in use; of short u in volume; of short e in vignette; and of the second i in familiarity. It has a peculiar lightish consonant sound, ending with a light sound of e in mete, -	8
<b>h</b> h. hē	h in hot, when. It requires no particular position of the organs of speech; but a strong expiration of air only. Hence, at first trial, it seems to be almost involved in some other primary sounds, especially those which have considerable of the aspirate. This has probably led some to mistake <i>wh</i> for a simple sound, and to think that the sound of the h comes before that of w in <i>when</i> . -	1
		<hr/> 13

*The seventh subdivision has but one letter, and that is a final, used only after the syllabic vowel sound. It has, of course, but one name.*

<b>3</b> 3. 3ng	This letter stands for ng in prong; n in flank, finger - - - - -	2
		<hr/> 2

*Note.*—The other sound, before mentioned as coming into existence, is also a final. But I think it not yet used enough to demand for itself a letter.

The different discovered methods of expressing the sounds of the twenty-four consonants, - - - - -	81
The different discovered methods of expressing the sounds of the sixteen vowels, - - - - -	100
	<hr/>
The different discovered methods of expressing all our forty primary sounds, - - - - -	181
Subtract the whole necessary number of such methods, - - -	40
	<hr/>
This shows the number of the redundant and useless methods to be,	<u>141</u>



*Some special means for saving labor in reading, writing, and printing.*

1. Five characters, each to be used instead of two or more letters; the old character & for a-n-d; 8 for ou and ow; 9 for oi and oy; x for ks; 6 for gz.

2. The most obscure sounds of the vowels, together with *e* as in *met*, when placed between consonants, and *u* as in *duck*, when placed before *r*, need not be expressed at all, being necessarily implied; as b-t-r; up-l n-d; q-8-r, &c.

3. When the sound of the vocal name of a consonant is the same as that of a word, let the said consonant be used *for* the word; as the letter *b* for the word *be*; i—ie; w—we; h—he, &c.

4. Abbreviations of whole words; as nt for nqt; wt—whqt, v—av; f—far; fr—frqm; 4—4n; it—ipt; wc—wh4c; u—yu; yr—yur; ir—iør; z—h4z; f—hf; lz—h4z; fm—hfm; if—irfor; wh—whør; wf—whør-for; m—mør; mc—mæc; mr—mor; mst—most; wz—waz; m—vm; r—er; bn—b4n; nr—nar; hv—høv; hd—hød; hz—høz; wI—w4I; qI—qvI; qd—q7d; kd—k7d; wd—w7d; k—køn; 8—8r; o—øs; sc—sæc; is—i4s; wn—whn; iz—iez; hz—h4z; hm—h4m.

5. Abbreviations of the fore parts of words; as nr—4ntr; kn—kqn; km—kqm; ds—d4s; sb—søb; sr—supr; ts—trøns; ms—m4s; x—øks; 6—øjz.

*Observations naturally subsequent to the preceding alphabet.*

1. It furnishes the materials for a fair, full, exact, and simple representation of our spoken language, as far as the nature of the case, and due facility and speed in writing, will permit. This is all that can be reasonably required of an alphabet.

2. I will here place the eighteen new letters, with their names and significations, by themselves, for convenience in learning them, as—

**a**—âwe—as in hal—hall. **æ**—ä—as in pert—part. **l**—ôô—as in prfv—prove. **Λ**—oh—as in stan—stone. **ſ**—äh—as in yhy—aha. **q**—öh—as in pqt—pot. **n**—äh—as in hvt—hat. **7**—ôh—as in w7lf—wolf. **ø**—üh—as in døk—duck. **ε**—ëh—as in pøt—pet. **4**—ih—as in p4n—pin. **c**—chē—ëch—as in çrc—church. **I**—thē—ëth—as in i8—thou, i4r—thither. **q**—shē—ësh—as in qm—shine. **R**—thē—ëth—as in brR—breath. **Λ**—zhē—ëzh—as in tr4r—treasure. **J**—gē—ëg—as in j4j—gig. **3**—ëng—as in sa3—song.

[*Note.*—1. To learn all that is contained in the above eight lines is all that is necessary in order to read and write in the use of the reformed alphabet. 2. All the old twenty-two available letters should be printed just as they have been, except the *dots* of the *ies* and *jays*.]

3. Any additional elementary sounds which shall hereafter be discovered, distinguished, and defined, by any who use English, or any that shall be adopted from abroad, should not, as heretofore, be put upon letters already

existing and appropriated; but each, of sufficient consequence, should be marked by a distinct additional letter. This would prevent most of the evils now complained of, and their recurrence in time to come.

4. We have many words similar in orthography, but dissimilar in sound and signification. This great evil would be annihilated in this projected reformation, by conforming the spelling to the sound; as the letters s-l-o-u-g-h are sometimes pronounced *sls*, and then they mean a *miry place*; and sometimes *slaf*, and then they mean the cast-off skin of a serpent; also the letters b-a-s-s are pronounced *bas*, and then they mean a kind of fish; sometimes *bas*, and then they mean a part in music; and sometimes *bns*, and then they mean a mat, &c. You now see how this evil is cured.

5. This reformation would tend greatly, as far as adopted, to promote uniformity in pronunciation—a thing very desirable. Its exactness in representing the proper sounds of the words, and its uniformity of spelling, would always tend to this effect.

6. For sake of ease and pleasantness of sound, most of the unaccented vowels are slowly amalgamating with short *i*, *e*, and *u*, especially the latter. This, I conclude, is the reason why there have become so many different methods of expressing these sounds—the first, eleven; the second, fourteen; and the third, twenty-three.

7. It would be both patriotic and wise for the men of letters in Great Britain and this country no longer to be endeavoring to Gallicize, Germanize, Latinize, Hellenize, or Hebraize, our language; but, by every means, to *Anglicize* it, and add to its symmetry, euphony, compactness, and distinctive nationality.

8. It is probably the fact, that additional primary sounds begin at first slowly to appear among the illiterate in some rough uncouth interjections. After a lapse of time, many of these become nouns, and obtain their various attributes, definitives, and connectives, and finally acquire a respectable standing in language. Thus, the primary sound of the Hebrews and other orientals, *ah*, or a moderate sound of *a* as in *part*, broken off suddenly with an aspirate or a consonant, as in *ah! pass*, is taking its place, though a very modest one, in our language, appearing in many interjections, and in some other words, and does therefore justly deserve to be marked by its own distinct letter, which I have given it. The case is similar with regard to *o* as in *oh! stone, spoken*, which I have also accommodated with a letter. Thus, my number of letters has been increased beyond my original design.

9. I take it as a granted doctrine, that the whole legitimate object of alphabetic writing is to represent to the sight, *as accurately and as simply as possible*, the sounds of spoken words. Hence the written language should always be seeking conformity to the spoken, rather than the spoken to the written. This would entirely prevent all future disagreement between our orthography and our orthoëpy, and more fully represent the epistolary writer's living and known sounds and tones used in his common conversation. But let all the elocutionary authorities and influences in our country, and other countries using English; let all the public speakers, and the authors and publishers of standard works, constantly use their endeavors to promote uniformity in pronunciation, and of course, on this plan, uniformity of orthography also, wherever our language is used.

10. Possibly this reformed alphabet might be easily applied to help much against the great calamity of our having many words similar in sound, but dissimilar in orthography and meaning; and that by *forming and fixing* a very slight variation of sound by which the words might be audibly distinguished; thus, *t* for t-o-o, *tu* for t-w-o, *to* for t-o; *ir* for t-h-e-i-r, *ir* for t-h-e-r-e; *al* for a-i-l, *ol* for a-l-e; *il* for i-s-l-e; *isl* for a-i-s-l-e, &c. However, on this very important matter, I do not decide.

### OBJECTIONS CONSIDERED.

Written languages have generally originated among people in a greater or less degree unimproved, and are therefore liable to great imperfection. Hence they do, like other things, however difficult, after a nation have become far advanced in civilization, demand great alterations for the better. This argument is available with regard to every other concern of human society; why not, then, to this? The change herein proposed would be a very cheap and efficient instrument to urge forward our public interests and honor. What dire calamities are we still enduring *by means of the leprous productions* of the dark or almost barbarous ages, *which are now ponderous clogs indeed* to our characteristic enterprise and energy. How long shall they remain for our grievous national injury and shame? Have we not in us yet some *Saxon*, some *British* blood?—some American counsel, skill, and independence?—some Yankee ingenuity and force, that we may speedily demolish, or *whittle away*, these sore evils, entailed on us by our honored, though remote and unprivileged, ancestors? Then, let the whole be stirring *in* us, and *among* us, till there shall result an achievement and a glory such as the world has never seen. Ay, indeed, it is high time this grand affair were accomplished, or well in progress; for truly it should be done, it must be done, yea, moreover, *it will be done*, if our combined enterprise and courage, skill and energy, say so.

Though it seems that I might stop here with this general answer to all objections, yet I will come down to some particulars, and use further endeavors to pacify the objector's feelings.

1. "It will obstruct the privilege of future etymological research." I answer: Perhaps not one in ten thousand would ever have occasion for this. Persons acquainted with other languages might recognise our words of foreign origin about as readily from their sound and English meaning, united, as from their dress. But, after all, the chief object of speakers and writers, philologists and lexicographers, should be to know the *present* English or American vernacular meaning of words, irrespective of origin or derivation. Besides, the native orthography of all foreign words, the originals of our words derived from other languages, and the old orthography of all our own words, *as far and as long as necessary*, might easily be placed in some of our dictionaries, or all of them, for needed accommodation; and all this, on the reformed method, would not make them so large as they are now.

2. "The books already in existence would become useless." Answer: 1. None valuable *need* be lost, and for the loss of the rest no one should mourn. 2. Both alphabets might be learned while the change is forming; thus all, for a necessary term, might be able to read and write in

either. 3. For consulting ancient records, or other fortuitous occasions, the old could be learned in times to come as easily as in times past. 4. All books worthy of it would be, in due season, reprinted in the new dress, and could be afforded cheaper than now.

3. "Authors, publishers and booksellers would suffer loss in old stock." Answer: The change might be, and doubtless would be, regulated by these, and be so gradual as would give fair opportunity to dispose of old stock, and close that mode of the manufacture. Besides, the diminution in the expense of printing, and the natural rise of books in proportion to this diminished expense, would probably more than cancel all loss, even that in stereotype plates. The loss in moveable types would be trifling; for the old capitals would be disused, the twenty-six old common letters would still be employed, and, for the present, no new matrices need be formed for any of the forty letters, or five characters, except the expulsion of the dots from the *ies* and *jays*.

4. "The old hard, dry, tiresome methods of primary learning tend to discipline the mind and improve its faculties, especially the memory." Answer: But the easy, pleasant, and interesting substituted learning, all profitable in itself, would surely do much more towards this very important object. This is the dictate of nature, reason, common sense, and experience. Besides, the success of this project would doubtless produce a great and blessed revolution in the affairs of common early education, and cause the time, character, and abilities of children to be worth more at twelve years of age than they usually have been at sixteen. There is, in truth, something more agreeable and useful for children to learn and to do than to be, for years of their precious time, toiling, and delving, and plodding in most distressing and ruinous confinement at the strange and dreadful old alphabet and orthography, even if it were nothing but giving names to stones in the wall, or the trees in a grove, and committing them to memory! Now I should not think that any would again make this objection.

5. "All readers and writers must relearn to read and write." Answer: The expense and inconvenience of change have, in this plan, been avoided as much as possible; and I have no doubt, and that from actual experiment, that good readers and writers in the old would learn to read and write in this, with proper assistance, though slowly at first, *in less than six hours*. Dexterity and speed would, of course, be acquired by use and habit. Let none, then, be greatly troubled any more on this score; for it is no great affair to learn the forms and uses of eighteen new letters when the sounds are already familiar. I trust that this mighty objection will now no more be urged by people of sense and wisdom.

6. "Children, by much help and stimulating, usually get over, somehow, the chief difficulties in the old literature before they arrive at the proper age for criticising these matters, and soon forgetting, very much, their former toils and sufferings, their prejudices become strong in favor of the old written language." Answer: Apply this argument successfully to all subjects, and there is an end, at once, to all improvements. We have already been governed quite too long by the prepossessions, the early notions and whims of childhood, and the imperious and senseless customs and authority of the semi-benighted by-gone ages. But full-grown men of the present eventful and improving age, and of this free and enlightened country, should deliver themselves of childish and half-



barbarian trammels, and dare to search, and think, and speak, *and act also*, for removing the immense evils that enwrap our precious, extending, and improving literature, and that deprive it of more than half its value.

During how many *more* years, ages, and generations, must the enterprising posterity of the brave settlers of this country, indeed our own dear children, be unnecessarily subject, in their ductile and forming age, to the cruel labor, the tormenting vexation, and the tiresome, stupifying, and deleterious confinement, imposed on them, as it was on us, before days of maturity and independent inquiry; and all that, too, by blind attachment to the awkward, ugly, indecent, clownish, cumbrous, hideous dress of our refined, polished, powerful, harmonious, and delightful language? In the name and pride of our country, and of all the English race, I do beg for our admirable language a dress suited to its character and merits. Do not, I entreat you, deem me sacrilegious and monstrously wicked, and deserting Heaven's vengeance, for denouncing and blaspheming that paltry, shapeless old idol, the coarse and bungling manufacture of partly-civilized people, long ago passed away and gone; although it did, at vast pains and expense, receive your obedient devotions some four or five years of your otherwise brilliant and promising childhood and youth.

Had a longer, a happier, and a more productive course of natural, plain, interesting, and useful oral instructions been generally used with children, and had they not been put to artificial literature till able to investigate for themselves, this needed reformation would, long ago, have been accomplished, and that, too, easily and freely, without *rub* and *tug* and *strife*.

Allow me here for a moment, like a true American, and a son of "the old Bay State," the centre of New England energy, independence and glory, and with the intrepidity of a patriot, philanthropist and Christian, to attack some of our old educational customs, as our honored fathers did those of the long-continued religious oppression and civil tyranny. And we will rejoice that the conflict may be prosecuted and victory won, without shedding blood, and multiplying widows and orphans.

Quite too early in the life of our young, active, social, imitative fellow-beings, have we dropped, if we ever began, free and pleasing oral, model, and sample instructions, administered kindly, simply, and incidentally by affectionate parents, or assistant parents, and shut them up in schools, and confined them to artificial literature. In this, truly, we have exactly reversed the just order of things. We should have *begun* with nature and *ended* with art; or, in other words, we should, in the great concerns of education, have more obediently, faithfully, and entirely, followed nature's dictates, from the first dawn of physical, sensitive, intellectual, and moral existence, and should have continued thus to do, admitting art incipiently and occasionally to assist nature in her wise, beneficent, and godlike operations.

Thoroughly reform our written language, and then learning to read, spell, and write, would be so easy that formal schools and set lessons in sore and ruinous confinement, would be totally unnecessary. If the previous education be right, these valuable accomplishments would, in proper season, be sought after, and obtained incidentally, like other kinds of every-day business, *as the farmer's son learns to reap, and his daughter to sweep*. You may, therefore, safely let artificial literature alone, till chil-



dren shall have arrived at some age and maturity ; and even then you need not hurry or press them forward in it, *provided, however*, that they, as much as possible, under the care of parents, or assistant parents, their natural guardians and teachers, have their time properly divided between interesting, free, and safe recreations, proper manual labors, and a good system of oral, model, and sample instructions, advancing spontaneously and delightfully *towards* artificial literature, and *into* it, as they approach adult years. *Let these be the natural tendencies, and these the sure results of any new or improved system of a general primary education*, and then do what you please with the old common schools ; only do not, at such vast expense, privation and suffering, allow them to *stun*, and *stunt*, and *stupidify*, and *stagnate*, and *stultify*, our dear, affectionate, sprightly, and promising children.

I rejoice that the people of this country, the cradle of civil, literary, educational, and religious light and liberty, are waking up, though slowly, to this vastly important object, and beginning to discover their errors, and the natural and effectual remedies. This, I trust, in its onward progress, will contribute much towards the general improvement and happiness of the rising generations, and much also towards the radical, thorough and timely reform of the external dress, and the ocular representation of our worthy and delightful language.

*I will now, for exercise, demonstration, and comparison, lay down a few sentences in both the old and the new forms.*

1. *Old.* A good neighborhood is like a little heaven below ; who, then, will not try much to make his own such ?—No. of letters, 81.

“*Nu.* A j7d nabrh7d 4z lik a l4tl hvn belo ; hf in w4l nyt tr1 m4c to mak h4z on s4c?—N4mbr 4v ltrz, 59.

2. *Old.* Providence, though it frowns now, yet it may smile at length, with the tender of most precious gifts.—83.

“*Nu.* Prqv4dn5, io 4t fr8nz n8, yt 4t ma smil vt l3R, w4l i tndr 4v most prq4s j4fts.—60.

3. *Old.* Young people should always be willing to follow good counsel.—54.

“*Nu.* Y43 pepl q7d alwaz b w4l43 t4 f4lo j7d k8nsl.—37.

4. *Old.* Without delay send the news throughout the country.—46.

“*Nu.* W4l8t dela snd i nuz Rrf8t i k4ntr4.—29.

5. *Old.* Good boys will honor their parents and love each other.—48.

“*Nu.* J7d b9z w4l qnr ir pr4rnts & l4v ec 4r.—31.

6. *Old.* Joseph, spell the word *though*. Tee-aitch-o-you-gee-aitch. Spell *wish*. Doubleyou-ie-ess-aitch. Spell *through*. Tee-aitch-ar-o-you-gee-aitch. Spell *when*. Doubleyou-aitch-ee-en. Spell *cough*. See-o-you-gee-aitch.—161.

“*Nu.* g4zf, spl i wrd io. Ie-o. Spl w4q. We-4-gq. Spl Rrf. R4e-ar-f. Spl whn. We-he-gn. Spl kaf. Ke-a-gf.—63.

7. *Old.* We should receive the truths of nature, reason, and revelation into good and honest hearts.—77.

“*Nu.* W q7d resev i trfRs av nacr, rezn, & rvlaqən, 4ntə j7d & qnst herts.—52.

8. *Old.* Good morning, neighbor Clough. Well then, you too are driving your two cows to their good mountain pasture.—92.

“*Nu.* J7d marn4s nabr kləf. Wl in yu tʃər driv4s yur tu k8z tə i7d m8ntn pʃscr.—60.

9. *Old.* What could the nation do better than to reform its alphabet and orthography radically?—75.

“*Nu.* Wyt k7d i naqən dʃ btr ɪn tə refarm 4ts ɒlfabt & aɹɪjɹaf4 rɒd4kɒl4?—58.

10. *Old.* Give facility to early literature and science, and you will speedily see the precious results in the general mental, moral, and social elevation.—122.

“*Nu.* J4v tʃs4lt4 tə ərle l4trtur & sɪns, & yu w4l spedle se i prqəs rzɒlts 4n i ɡurəl mntəl, marəl, & soqəl ɟlvaqən.—84.

☞ In these ten sentences, according to the old, there are 839 letters ; according to the new 533 : the difference 306—*considerably over one-third*. The general average would doubtless be quite one-third without the afore-said abbreviations, and with them, quite two-fifths. Now, it is here fully demonstrated, that this reformation would save one-third of all the expense of silent reading, of all writing and printing. Is there not here, then, an object worthy of serious and general consideration? And should not those who have this matter under their control feel their responsibility to God and their country, and speedily adopt this, or a better, reformed alphabet and orthography?

It is to be expected that in this age of invention and improvement, there would be many unavailing attempts at this reformation. But let all well-disposed undertakers be comforted and encouraged by the consideration, that every such attempt will probably do its share towards perfecting for our language a system of writing which will finally be found worthy of general adoption ; its share, also, towards proving to every enlightened and liberal mind, the laboring and pressing necessity of such a reformation.

All herein contained is presented to excite attention and discussion, criticism and correction, as an essay towards preparing for future adoption all necessary improvements in the elements of *our swiftly-spreading* literature.

After all the expense, and long and severe toil, amidst many embarrassments, devoted to this whole concern, and after bringing it as near to what it should be as I shall probably be able soon myself to do, I now freely offer it to my nation, and to her mother country ; asking no greater reward than its efficiency in advancing their physical and moral, their mental and social improvement.

into good and honest men.

"The 17th report of the Commission, dated 18th June 1854, is a

very good one, and I think it will be found to be a very good one.

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